Nothing Can Combat Hannibal's Craving for Amusement

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/18770722.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham & Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Jack Crawford (mentioned), Matthew Brown (Hannibal), Dr. Frederick Chilton, Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham's Dogs, Will Graham's Father (mentioned), Alana Bloom (mentioned)
Additional Tags:	Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Alternate Universe, Hannibal Lecter is the Chesapeake Ripper, Hannibal Lecter is in the Asylum, Will is a Mess, Someone Help Will Graham, Kidnapping, I'm Bad At Tagging, Just read the synopsis, Possessive Hannibal Lecter, Manipulative Will Graham, Cannibalism, Hannibal is in the asylum for like one chapter though, which i guess is a spoiler?, I'm sort of winging this fanfiction though but it seems to be going places and I have ideas so yeah, hope you all enjoy!
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2019-05-09 Updated: 2019-08-05 Words: 7,417 Chapters: 6/?

Nothing Can Combat Hannibal's Craving for Amusement

by FantasyRyder

Summary

An alternative universe where Hannibal is already in Chilton's asylum when Will comes into the picture (as he got defeated by Miriam Lass when she discovered the Wounded Man drawing years before). Hannibal obviously takes an interest in Will after he seeks help with a case Jack enlisted his help in and finds a way to escape.

Chapter 1

The halls of the asylum made Will uncomfortable no matter how much the staff insisted on his safety. As a matter of fact, he was surprised when he figured it wasn't the mentally unstable in the building that worried him, but rather the workers. On one hand, he empathized strongly with those in Chilton's asylum, was familiar with a few of them from articles and previous arrests even, but on the other, the staff was odd and (in some cases) had the most power.

Chilton was a good subject of his anxieties; he was a nervous man with too much power for his fragile sense of self to handle and it was clear to Will that mental health hadn't been his preferred occupation. Despite this, he'd shown Will a little too much interest when he came in suggesting to talk to one of the most prolific offenders in the building: all toothy grins and sneaky, conniving glances. Will could feel Chilton's eagerness coming off of him in waves and could tell just how badly he wanted the special investigator flayed open mentally, similarly to his patients.

Suffice to say, Will cut off the conversation the moment Frederick stepped over the boundaries he clearly put in place. Will never felt satisfaction in his rudeness, but he did feel relief wash over him when the smaller man hastily left after a backhanded comment that was so sudden that Will didn't remember uttering it.

From there he was told to follow a guard, also odd enough for Will to notice, but not enough for him to want to turn back. When he walked past Will to lead the way, he believed he saw the name “Brown” on his name tag but wasn't going to make a show of remembering it. It wouldn't matter in the long run.

He hung back, leaned against the wall in a casual fashion, oversized uniform adding to his too-relaxed demeanor. Will was still wound tight from his previous exchange so Brown's (first name now revealed to be Matthew) lax figure felt like an insult or assertion of dominance, especially highlighted when his nearly black brown eyes flickered over Will’s form before Will turned to walk down the hall to the door he was aiming to enter.

The hallway as an empty stretch leading to the doorway which opened to Hannibal Lecter's cell. Matthew hung back, resting near a few security guards with his eyes lying lazily on the monitor that put the room on display. When Will opened the door though, Will realized it was just that, a room, not a cell.

There was an open space for visitors that did not compare in size to the room placed behind the protective glass. The far wall harbored filled bookshelves and the rest of the space was used for what you would expect: desks, a decent bed, even an instrument or so.

Hannibal was sitting at the desk with a pleasant posture, reading inconspicuously in a way that showed only his left profile to Will. His head raised almost as slowly as Will entered the room, eyes shut as he deeply inhales, exhales, opens his eyes, and looks to the profiler in a non-scrutinizing fashion.

Will was surprised by the action before his blue eyes raked over the line of holes along the glass for circulation. His reaction of surprise melted into disgust and confusion.

“Did you just… smell me?”

He seemed to debate with his words, eyes flickering down for a millisecond before meeting the standing man's hesitant glare. “It's a rather atrocious aftershave if you don't mind me being blunt.” He stands and strolls to face the man on the other side of the glass, his form not unlike Will's, but weirdly intimidating, though Will's stance did not falter.

“I do, my father buys it for me every Christmas.”

A half smile plays on his lips. “I can respect sentimental value, though I would recommend searching for another if this is not our final discussion.”

Will took a deep breath, sighed deeply, and nodded, pulling out a file of a recent case of murders, similar to those Hannibal had confessed to years before.

The man's head tilted in curiosity. “I am not being interviewed I presume?”

“No… this,” Will spoke in a clear, businesslike tone, “is a case Jack Crawford has me working on.”

Hannibal's brows raise in interest.

“And I'll be glad to have your help, or opinion, or honestly anything you could provide.”

“Why specify Jack Crawford's involvement?”

Will places the file in the box for Hannibal to hold and look over, backing away so he could retrieve the gift. “I felt you would appreciate my honesty.”

Hannibal flipped through the pages, mildly disgusted by the amateur recreation of his work.

Will noticed his eyebrow twitch and leers forward for commentary.

“Did Jack send you?” Hannibal speaks at last, looking up to the boy at least a foot closer.

“Um… no, I uh… I came on my own accord.”

“Because you do not understand the killer?”

“Because I wanted the master's opinion on the copycat's work.”

Hannibal released a respectful scoff at that, “A play for a rise, I see?”

“The killer strikes me as a fan more than anyone genuinely passionate about the act itself. No one, aside from his idol himself, will drag him out of his hole. So go on,” Will nods to the open file in his hand, “tell me what you think, Doctor Lecter.”

Hannibal's brown eyes glint with amusement at Will's words before they flick back down to the pictures provided. “The scene is uncoordinated; it is unspecific. The boy is clearly basing it off of photo references provided by the archives of TattleCrime. It is a recreation, but a weak one, and was crudely planned and sloppy.”

Will nodded along to Hannibal's words, pacing about as he listened and allowed himself a particularly large reaction at the mention of the prolific news site.

“How many of these recreations have been discovered?”

“Five, all the same really.”

The faint smirk Hannibal allowed himself was more obvious than he wanted it to be. “Than clearly, he is not learning,” he closes the file, almost in defeat, “a shame really. I see the proof of this dialogue to be the nail in his figurative coffin.”

“And I thank you for that, really. Jack wouldn't really approve of this as you may know, but I wanted… I needed,” the last word was accentuated with passion, “this to wrap up before anyone else got hurt.”

“And before you did? Yes?”

Will's wide, doe-like eyes flit up into Hannibal's predatory own. “What do you mean?” A hush fell over his normally clear tone.

“You were forced to empathize with killers shortly after I entered the asylum. After relentless abuse and attention from Freddie Lounds, Jack allowed you a break, but now you are here, back from a supposed retirement, doing his bidding again. Understandably, you want to return to your dogs.”

“How do you know all of that?”

“I was an avid reader of hers, something you'd classify as a guilty pleasure, I suppose.”

“Ah,” Will laughed shortly, nodding his head no and glaring up at the ceiling, tone now playful. “now why am I not surprised?” he asked rhetorically.

Hannibal looked him over a few moments longer, specifically noting how the thin skin of his neck stretched over his tendons, windpipe, veins, and jugular. He imagined ways he could kill the fellow in front of him, a rather crude game he recognized.

A sliced throat was efficient but brutal, the jugular being a more humane avenue in regards to knives. While Hannibal wanted to bask in the sight of William's vivid red blood dripping from his mouth and pouring from his neck, he received no satisfaction from the grey images his mind created. Even when imagining his own large hand crushing the boy's windpipe, he did not grow as excited as he did when he talked to him.

At last, his eyes trailed up to Willam's non-reciprocating own again.

“Not fond of eye contact, are you?”

He released an exacerbated sigh, shoulders slumping in defeat. “Not particularly, no. I… always see too much or too little and always get sidetracked by the details, like uh... whether or not someone has hepatitis,” in a fleeting few seconds during Will's tangent, his eyes met Hannibal's now curious own, “or heterochromia, like a burst of green among the brown.”

Hannibal allowed himself to genuinely smile at the man's spastic nature.

“So yeah, if possible, I try to avoid all eye contact.”

“A curse courtesy of your empathy.”

Will hastily began to wrap a scarf around the neck Hannibal was observing. “Exactly…”

The serial killer recognized Will was on his way to leave and returned his file.

“I enjoyed this, Will. I would not be opposed to speaking with you more in the future. That is if you exchange that aftershave.”

Will let himself nod and laugh, “Have a good night Doctor Lecter,” and left.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

A short period of time and series of conversations passed before it was revealed that the copycat was Matthew Brown, the guard who lead Will to Hannibal's cell in the first place. It was a shock to Will when that fact was revealed to him by none other than the notorious Dr. Lecter.

"Why… Why are you telling me this?"

"To give you a headstart."

Will's brows furrowed in confusion at his words, patiently waiting for elaboration that he was soon given.

Hannibal leans forward slightly, mouth a few inches from a hole in the clear wall separating them. The special investigator could practically feel the cold rush of Hannibal's words over his cheek despite being a good foot or so away from those lips. "He wires the mics."

Will followed the psychopath's brown gaze to what he could only assume was a mic in the corner of the room behind him, and with slightly widened eyes, realized that must have been how Matthew confessed to Hannibal without another witness. Hastily, he fled the room in search for the killer Hannibal ratted out. As he shoved open the door and fled, Hannibal watched the running man with interest until the door closed on its own accord, visualizing a fleeing rabbit, running to its fate with almost a saddened demeanor.

Hannibal didn't really know why he did it aside from his state of boredom at the time, but he did know that Will aimed to leave the moment Matthew's case was solved, and that just wouldn't do. After all, how good to Hannibal was Will if he retired hundreds of miles away? So selfish of the special investigator to introduce himself and aim to leave the second Hannibal familiarized himself with his interest in the man.

Though it saddened him, he came to terms with the idea that if Will would no longer be in his life, he'd rather frequent the photos of him provided by Freddie Lounds on her website after his murder at the hands of Matthew Brown, his copycat. So instead of allowing his sloppy follower to be inevitably found because of his own mistakes, he insisted Matthew kill Will in the most artful way he could imagine. His death would be momentarily honorable in his hunt for the Chesapeake Ripper's copycat and be eternally beautiful in the cloud.

Matthew had a knack for Christianity, most definitely having been brought up in a religious household, so he was caught attempting to cut into a mildly sedated Will's back nearly a day before Will and Hannibal's dialogue, aiming to recreate the murders of another notorious killer Jack Crawford and his team almost caught. Apparently, Matthew had gotten too excited in his kidnapping and failed to turn off internet access in the house he planned on killing Will in. From what was written in an article reviewing the events, Will was bound with handcuffs

that, when gaining mild control of his muscles, could not entrap his hands when he dislodged his metacarpal from its socket. From there, he reached a computer and emailed a friend of his. A fellow psychiatrist that Hannibal went to university with.

Hannibal was silently irked with Matthew's sloppiness but didn't mind hearing of how he was shot and killed when he was found. If anything, it meant that Jack Crawford's teacup survived and Hannibal was seen as an antihero in some respects. Of course, he never got a thank you, but rather a visit from the mentioned chief, and affirmation that he recognized what good he'd done. Of course, Jack knew there was a catch, but didn't prod further and left Hannibal to realize that his attempts to keep Will around in any respect was futile.

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Will drove back home with his dogs in tow. Glancing into the rearview of his minivan, he smiled faintly at all seven of them, clearly exhausted from their week near the coast at Will's cabin. It was exactly what he needed to mark a year straight of being freed of FBI work, and he distantly decided he would accept Jack's offer if he asked him to work on a case again, it'd been long enough and he quietly missed human contact.

The cabin came with no internet or signal, but Will didn't mind. When he went there he felt safe, unworried with the events unfolding past the trees that shielded him from the outside world. There he could feel most similar to when he was a child on the coast with his father, learning of boat mechanisms and fishing, not bothering himself with slaughtered teenagers or psychotic asylum guards trying to rip the skin from his back.

In response to the sudden onslaught of memories, his blue eyes closed then opened when his brain cleared and drifted back to how much he enjoyed watching his makeshift family jump through the waves. A single dimple cut into his right cheek caused by a fake half smile as Will convinced himself that he had no reason to stress.

Finally, he pulled into his familiar driveway, opened the van's door, and allowed his dogs to run around the yard gratefully after their travel.

He walked past them, to the porch, and reached the entrance, pulling out his keys and opening the door. When it easily succumbed, he turned to his happy canines, deciding to let them stay outside, and left the door open.

He inhaled, glancing about the living room and amusedly goes straight to his fridge, finding a bottle of whiskey and allowing himself a drink since he'd denied himself of that luxury on his trip. After watching the amber liquid flow into a small glass, he swigged it, groaning gratefully at the burn and only allowing himself one more shot before heading towards his bedroom with the bag he left with.

The hum of silence in his house was deafening, and despite hearing the dogs yipping in the distance, there was a faint anxiety looming over him, similar to how he felt when dealing with an awkward silence or being forced to stay with someone who refuses to talk to you.

Placing his bag next to his bed, he glanced to his nightstand. On top of it laid a few random notes about customers he'd already helped with their boat repairs and an empty bottle of

whiskey he neglected to throw away before he left. He knew there was a pistol in the drawer, hidden by a hinged door in the back of the compartment, so as smoothly as he could, he reached in, lifted the wooden flap, but paled when his hand didn't meet the cold brush of metal he was expecting.

All at once, warnings screamed in his head, flashed sporadically like a strobe light, and all he could see was “danger”. Despite how his brain was reacting, his body worked fluidly and efficiently, recalling empathizing with rather smooth killers and before even he could react, he grabbed at the neck of the heavy glass bottle and swung it at the presence behind him.

Surprisingly, the looming form grabbed at it easily and stopped the offense as though it was nothing. At that, Will realized he was becoming sluggish, not nearly moving as fast as he would want to. As he thought, the bottle was taken from his hand while he stood in his bedroom, dumbfounded.

“When I came a day or so ago, I noticed the empty bottle next to your bed, Will. You may have a slight problem with alcohol.”

Will recognized that tone bitterly, not exactly registering just how threatening his situation was in his drugged mind. His brows furrowed and nose wrinkled, opening his mouth like he aimed to release a rebuttal but nothing came out.

“Not even a minute into your house and you go straight for the whiskey, not that I blame you really, rather nice burn I must say. You choose well.”

At that, Will lost his footing, desperately gripping onto the nightstand to keep standing but failing and crumbling onto his knees.

“And, though obvious, I wouldn’t have you lose consciousness in any other way.“ Hannibal kneeled to match Will’s height as the profiler struggled to keep his eyes open stubbornly. The killer's brown eyes skimmed over Will as he struggled almost affectionately, head tilting as he watched, enraptured. When he spoke, his tone was breathless, like he was speaking of a piece of art in a quiet museum, “I did not want you to feel any pain.”

Will grunted weakly.

“Yes?”

“Are you g’nna… eat me?” He mumbled, tired blue eyes fighting and succeeding to glare up at Hannibal through long, dark lashes.

“No, but I wouldn’t tempt me like that, Will," Hannibal's tone was deceivingly playful.

A faint laugh left Will's lips, pretty dimples now revealed to Hannibal. Hannibal smiled both sincerely and insincerely in response.

“Sleep.”

And Will did just that.

Chapter End Notes

This was probably the most fun I've had writing a chapter in a while. I hope you all enjoy and I absolutely love all of your comments! Thank you for your support!

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

Hi.

Been a hot minute. Sorry for the short chapter. Recently graduated but happy to get this and my other story chapters pumping out.

Thank you for your patience and your comments brighten my day. <3

Will’s eyes opened blearily to scope out his surroundings. Before his sight was revealed, he took in the setting without using that particular sense as to not indicate he was awake to whatever assailant had him this time.

The material against his cheek was slightly soft and smelt of dogs and salt water. He came to realize he was tied up in the back seat of his minivan and subtly struggled with whatever bound his arms and legs, gaining no give in the unwavering material. When he tried to shift his legs, he merely felt a pull against his arms and realized the rope keeping him compliant was intricately knotted as to link his ankles and wrists. The person who kidnapped him had experience with unruly prey and with that thought, Will suddenly remembered who captured him. It was only then when he finally opened his eyes, almost unafraid.

Will wasn’t gagged but he came to terms with that fact rather quickly when he remembered how much solace the killer driving the van took in their conversations a year before. The night sky stretched openly through the windows, revealing the fact that there was no real treeline in sight. They weren't near Wolf Trap.

“You’re awake.”

Will, who’s head and sight was directed to a window across from him, looked to the driver when his husky voice interrupted the silence. "Must've been a good ten hours right?" Will inferred from the sky.

"Good guess," he answered, obviously refraining from giving Will too much information (more so out of amusement than necessity). As expected, Will was unnerved by the broad comment.

"Where are we going, Hannibal?"

The man in question's eyes drifted to the profiler bound in the back seat, questioning if he should tell him but giving in Will's patient blue eyes. Hannibal recognized that his leaning to the boy could be a problem.

"One of my many secluded homesteads," Hannibal spoke matter-of-factly, facing the road once more.

"Secluded as in no one will be able to find us?"

"It would be very unlikely, yes."

Will nervously wet his lips and absentmindedly bit at them, causing the dried skin to flush. Hannibal, hyperaware and stifling his killers instinct, couldn't help but notice.

"Better to kill me?" Will finally asked, addressing the elephant in the van.

"What do you last remember before your consciousness was taken?"

Will struggled with his memories before speaking, "I remember trying to hit you. You weren't very fazed so that made me realize how lethargic I was. From there I think my heart rate did the work of getting whatever you put in my whiskey coursing through my veins."

"But you do not remember my words?"

He nodded his head no, "I couldn't hear you over the pulsing."

Hannibal let his mouth quirk, movement nearly too subtle and quick for the human eye. "I apologize for distressing you so."

"Keep your apology. You don't mean it sincerely. At least be honest with me before you eat me," Will spoke bitterly, eyes drifting down to watch the moonlight reflect against the felt of the car's seat.

"As the drug was coursing through your bloodstream, I made my intentions clear."

Will's weary blue eyes rose to Hannibal's in question once again.

"I do not aim to kill you, nor do I want you to be consumed, but you must stay compliant if you want what I do."

"What do you want… aside from me not killed or consumed?" Will hastily allowed the final part of his statement to flow from his mouth in a breath, as if Hannibal could take it back, not that Will thought he was being genuine in the first place.

Hannibal visibly thought for a good ten seconds, hands gripping the steering wheel firmly. Will's eyes raked over their obvious strength and the veins and bones beneath the epidermis.

"The discovery of the answer to that question will be an endeavor we share."

An air of dread and uncertainty overtook Will. Not only was he unable to get a grasp of what made this killer tick, but there was no discernable motive that even Hannibal could gather. This terrified Will.

Never in his life had he been forced to remain in the presence of such an enigma.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will eventually dozed back off, overcome with emotional exhaustion and choosing to conserve his energy for a time where it could be better utilized. Hannibal understood and allowed him the little pleasure as his maroon eyes raked over the expanse of snow and vast hills. The barely visible road Hannibal drove on lead to a humble forest which he soon entered, spending another two hours or so reaching his secluded destination: a rather contemporary cabin nestled in a clearing surrounded by dense, snow-caked pines.

He questioned if Will was lucid enough to wake if Hannibal lifted him to his room. Rather quickly, he rationalized that he could deal with Will's squirming if he decided he wanted to be difficult. Surprisingly, though, Will's eyes opened and he allowed himself to be complacent in Hannibal's strong arms, knowing that the struggle would only result in annoyance from the turbulent force he's under the observation of. And while it would be satisfying headbutting Hannibal's foreign nose, he knew it would do him the opposite of good.

Hannibal was grateful for the man's stillness despite being unaware of the ugly thoughts that raced through the brain of the curly haired man. Of course, he could assume. Will's empathy served to make him a kind, understanding individual, but the killer, with his psychological and neurological awareness, knew empathy was a double-edged sword. If it wasn't, Will would not be as damaged as he was.

Hannibal could only assume that his damage was not a byproduct of knowing how killers thought, but rather the fact that Will enjoyed the cruelty to an unknown extent. This fact intrigued Hannibal, as he recalled Will's excerpt from one of Dr. Bloom's books documenting the newly free cannibal.

The book was crudely written and her opinions were dreadfully boring. On top of that, Chilton's portions were overwhelmingly pretentious but Will's section is what made Hannibal so intrigued in the first place. It was brief, blunt, and humble. Hannibal had never felt as flayed open as he had reading Will's opinions.

His words were impersonal. While Frederick and Alana wrote like they knew Hannibal was reading, Will was nonchalant, like his words were forced out of him under a time limit.

Finally snapping out of his trance, Hannibal glanced down at the man, noticing how widely he looked up at him. He was analyzing Hannibal in that very moment.

"What do you see?" Hannibal spoke, using his free arm to hastily find the key between the wall and door frame. Will's brows furrow at the question.

"You seem like your reminiscing."

A faint smile spread across the cannibal's features as he opened the door and took a deep breath of cedar. The smell of the house was fresh, like it'd never been lived in. "I am," Hannibal spoke clearly.

Will gave him an unsure look.

"What were you doing when Dr. Alana Bloom asked for your analysis of my scenes?"

The man being questioned laughed abortively, as if he considered the question absurd, but when his amusement was not reciprocated, he cleared his throat and attempted to remember. The key word was attempted. "I… don't really remember, Dr. Lecter."

Hannibal blinked a few times, standing a foot or so from a couch in front of a large fireplace.

"I mean," Will nods his head no as he tries to grasp for a memory, "It must've been between classes at the academy. Nothing more than a minute dialogue because I'd have students that needed tutoring. She, uh, never really wanted to be in a room alone with me so I had other things to do during her interviews."

Finally, Hannibal exhaled from his nose and placed Will, still bound, on the soft couch.

Will was grateful when his slightly chafed cheek met a fur blanket placed on the couch. Despite the borderline freezing temperature of the cabin, the blanket warmed his cheek. He could barely see Hannibal as he walked slightly out of sight and returned with five logs of firewood, as Will's sight was obstructed by slightly oily dark hair (he'd neglected to wash it aside from the sea water that got in it while he played with his dogs).

His dogs.

"Hannibal."

He got no obvious response from the older man as he crouched in front of the fireplace to set the logs in place. Instead, all Will could see was the way one of his many white t-shirts (borrowed when Hannibal got to his house in Wolf Trap earlier) stretched over the muscles that ran down his back.

Will swallowed to relieve himself of the tightness in that back of his throat and spoke again, firmly so his dubious assailant could hear. "What did you do with my dogs?"

Despite the silence that followed the question, Will knew Hannibal had heard him and patiently waited for an explanation.

"I was relieved that you trained them to be docile. They were easy to herd back into your house."

"They're still there?"

"I doubt it. Most likely, they've already been discovered and taken in."

Will released a sigh of relief as Hannibal continued.

“When I escaped, the police went to check on the obvious. I had history with Alana, so they assigned her guards first, then Frederick, Jack, and even Freddie Lounds and the judge who insured my custody. I predicted that they’d come to your house a week or so after my absence, so I overturned the bag of dog food to be safe. Surely that will suffice for another few days if they have yet to be found?”

The man nodded his head, successfully tousling his already unruly hair. “It should. Thank you.”

Hannibal smiled faintly to himself, made obvious by the firelight that accentuated his features for Will's eyes.

At that, Will realized he'd just thanked a monster for not killing his dogs before he kidnapped him. A sigh left his mouth at Hannibal’s obvious amusement as his eyes fell shut in defeat.

“Do not regret courtesy, Will. I appreciate it.”

“Oh, I sure am glad,” Will spoke with bitter sarcasm. The clear tone complemented the tired husk that left his throat. No matter what Will said, Hannibal could find satisfaction in his words.

“Don’t be rude, Will.”

Will’s eyes drifted downwards, but his disdain was clear.

“It is clear I have an inclination to you, but I would not be brave.”

He finally sighed and renewed his attempts to shift about in his binds.

“You must ache.”

“Clearly.”

Hannibal’s movements stuttered but he allowed it that time. The answer to the question was clear, after all, and Will was having a pretty bad twenty-four hours.

“Will you fight me if I untie you?”

“Depends, how far would you say we are from civilization?”

“You scolded me for asking an obvious question, Will. Can you not answer that one yourself?”

Hannibal was right, Will realized. Why would they be close to anywhere within five hours of walking distance if Hannibal didn’t want to be found?

“So what will it be?”

“No, I won’t.”

The man nodded and approached, tediously untying every knot as to not waste rope which could come in handy. After what felt like thirty minutes, Will laid completely untied on the warming couch. A few more minutes passed before he tried to sit up. His limbs agonizingly ached but he managed to sit upright, facing the fire and looking at Hannibal's profile as he sat on a chair perpendicular to the couch.

"What's on the agenda?" Will hesitantly spoke, breaking the lengthy silence.

Hannibal's eyes did not waver from the fire. "You will clean yourself, then we'll have dinner."

Will's stomach tightened within his torso.

Chapter End Notes

Once again, absolutely love all of your comments.

Before writing Hannibal fanfiction, comments were rare and brief. This fandom never seizes to please me so thank you all for your comments, kudos, hits, subscriptions and all of the other fixens.

I love writing for you all. <3

Chapter 5

Will exited the pristine, obviously untouched shower and stood in front of a fogged mirror.

Hannibal trusted him with a razor, with weapons, and that fact overwhelmed Will with more hopelessness and anxiety than he'd care to admit.

After wiping away the fog, he stared at himself in the mirror.

He wished he could've said he had a plan or was thinking of one in that very moment, but the direness of the situation had barely set in. On top of that, it didn't help than Hannibal didn't even exhibit a miniscule need to kill his "victim".

Will realized he didn't really feel like he was in as much danger as he definitely was, and chose to bask in comforting ignorance for the brief period of time he'd be able. With that state of mind, he lifted the small pair of scissors and trimmed along his unruly stubble.

Almost on cue, a strong scent permeated throughout the bathroom, successfully stifling the warm lavender and rose oil that soothed Will's senses before.

Though he was drawn to the humble smell of soup at first, his stomach heaved violently once the floral scent completely disappeared and he was left imagining what Hannibal could have made it out of. All at once, Will was reminded of who Hannibal was and grasped at the porcelain sink in front of him, white knuckling it until his thoughts gathered cohesively.

He needed to be thinking of how to escape, he reminded himself over and over again, still unable to grasp at a creative thought.

Desperate, he glanced about the room, catching sight of each possible weapon but choosing not to register them. Hannibal left those there because he had a plan to combat each if Will was particularly uninspired.

Still, not in the mood to create a complicated plan, he stored the small pair of scissors in the sleeve of a rather large sweater that Hannibal supplied him with as he showered. The scissors were predictable but Will found himself aiming for predictability in his search for information.

With a final glance at himself in the mirror, Will left the bathroom, calmly walking to the backdoor on his way to the kitchen and attempted to move the doorknob. It wouldn't budge. A onceover of the glass panes also made it clear how thick they were.

Begrudgingly, Will made his way into the kitchen, hiding the disgust he obviously felt about Hannibal's stew despite how appetizing it looked and smelled.

"Scissors were a rather boring choice."

Will was unfazed by the cannibal's statement.

"I would have enjoyed watching you approach with the toilet lid, but scissors?" He tutted softly.

"I don't aim to incapacitate you tonight, Dr. Lecter."

He looked up into Will's cold eyes.

"But I'm happy you let me know the place was bugged… I had the inclination, after all."

Hannibal looks down to the bowls and smoothly, yet precisely, spoons the stew into them. "Given you admitted to planning on killing me later-"

"No- No, I never said kill."

Hannibal was silently unamused but corrected himself. "Given you admitted to planning on incapacitating me later, you understand I have no choice but to apprehend those scissors?"

Will took a deep breath, "I do," and allowed the scissors to fall into the palm of his hand from his sleeve.

As the weapon was given to the killer, Will imagined renewing his hold on the tool and jamming it into his eye. The blades, being held at such a length, would not puncture his brain. Will would not be a killer despite what everyone would like. Everyone including Hannibal obviously.

"Thank you. Now please," he gestures to the bowls while slipping the pair of scissors into the pocket of his apron, "find the table and help yourself."

Will did as told, sitting at the table while cupping the warm bowl and watching Hannibal rid himself of his apron and join him.

Hannibal ate as anyone else would aside from the contradictory refinement that Will couldn't conclude was disturbing or relieving. It fell more on the earlier, he found.

After the older man coerced Will with his eyes, the younger found himself sipping from the rich broth, stifling a groan of pleasure and gag at once.

Never had he felt more conflicted.

Will couldn't tell if Hannibal was insulted or pleased by his reactions. It could have been both given they varied drastically.

Hannibal opened his mouth, foreign tongue articulating words Will didn't recognize which defined the dish. He could barely hear him though, senses choosing to focus on one thing at a time. First, the steam that left Hannibal's dreadful creation, second, the feeling of breaths now being mechanically pushed in and out of Will's body, and finally, back on Hannibal's husky voice.

With a polite wrist over his mouth and clenched lids, Will spoke. "Hannibal," he interrupted, not daring to look up at the reaction which that garnered, "stop."

More seconds passed before Will gathered his bearings and looked up at the man sitting across from him.

Rather than anger, amusement sparkled within the depths of his orbs. In a measured lapse of time, Hannibal spoke again.

"You were considerably emaciated when you came back from your getaway."

Will wanted to scoff but stifled it.

"It has been nearly two days, you should eat, even if you convince yourself of your disgust."

" 'Convince myself' ?" Will released in a shocked breath, unable to fathom Hannibal's words in that moment. He wanted to stand up and yell out the obvious. Release all of the information he knew about Hannibal that could rationalize Will's seemingly absurd opinion of the dinner he was provided, but instead, he sat complacent and dumbfounded when Hannibal refused him the courtesy of explaining his wording.

Will nodded his head no, dried curls now swaying side to side childishly with the movement. "No… no. I can't do it. I- …" Will released a deep breath so his words would find better flow, "I won't."

"I am sorry you feel that way." He wasn't, not really. He couldn't be. And Will found the only thing he could have been sorry about was the wasted bowl of "people stew" masquerading as chicken soup.

Hannibal placed his spoon down politely and stood, figure more intimidating now that he wore tailored clothing (albeit slightly small given the subtly rounded stomach he gained over the years in Chilton's asylum) in comparison to the oversized red sweater Will was given. Still, he stood in place as the monster approached.

As he knew, Hannibal predominantly dabbled in non-physical violence. Will would not be struck in such an open stance.

No.

That wouldn't be fun.

"While I'd prefer to see you well fed, I will not force it upon you unless absolutely necessary."

Will absentmindedly imagined himself near death, in a starved state, being force fed a poor barista that worked near Hannibal's hideaway (he didn't have the time to question why his disturbed fantasy was so specific).

"If you cannot eat tonight, I will have to ask you to retire to your room."

It felt like Will was being scolded by his father all over again, that is, if his father was psychotic, refined, and Lithuanian, of course.

"Lead the way," he answered in a pleasant tone.

He was lead upstairs and slipped into the room as the door was opened for him. It was simple enough, but rather extravagant for Will's taste.

Walking about his room, he made his way to the bed and sat upon it, quietly running his fingers through a fur blanket, much like the one resting on the couch downstairs.

"You must miss your dogs."

"I know they're in good hands."

Silence.

"They'll come looking for me, you know. … They already are looking if anything."

"But they will not find us."

Will's eyes close to shut out his sights and remind himself of the hope that would have been hidden otherwise. He could get out of this if he needed to, but if he couldn't, would that imply that he didn't want to?

This thought made him open his eyes to blandly stare at the hardwood below his bare feet.

"Please get some sleep. I wake at seven."

Will nodded and watched him as he stared a moment longer, turned, and left.

The silence was deafening until interrupted by the sounds of latches locking into place within the door. Will wasn't surprised though, as the precautions were expected.

On the other hand, what he was surprised by was the bars that shielded Will from a surprisingly latched window.

Standing, he walked to the bars and pulled on a rather dubious looking one finding a surprising amount of malleability as one side was separated from the frame but the other remained welded in place. Frowning with his brows, he pulled again experimentally, not really aiming to damage anything.

It gave more and Will traced the weakness to a poor welding job on the side that was still stuck to the window frame.

Upon closer inspection, he found most of the other welds lackluster in nature as well and turned around, eyes meeting the lens of a camera right where he expected it to be positioned.

He didn't bother damaging it (what would be the point?) and turned off the lights, laying under the thick blankets and fisting the pelt, imagining laying with one of his dogs: a comforting thought.

That morning, Hannibal did not mention Will's discovery.

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It’d been days, days since he was kidnapped and brought to this nondescript location. Will could have inferred it'd been four or five but it felt like much longer. He elected to suppress being dramatic and guessed the amount of days was on the lower end of the spectrum than the higher.

It would have been easier to differentiate if the days were filled with some sort of terror or substance like he expected. Instead, the worst he had to deal with was the overwhelming tension and stress that came with being stuck in a random house with the country’s most prolific serial killer.

He’d get bored. He’d get bloodthirsty. It only made since as such, given he’d been locked in an asylum for nearly six years before he managed to escape.

Surely, he killed someone on the way, there was nothing else the “chicken soup” or any of the following dishes could have been made of, but when Will analyzed him through the evidence given during his court case it was clear Hannibal preferred the thrill of killing someone he knew.

Someone rude.

Someone like Will.

Another thing that was worth noting was Will’s concave stomach, ribs slightly visible if he were to bend.

It’s not like he’d been turning down every meal. He’d made a point of eating all of the greens, starches, and fruits given to him, but it was obvious doing so was only prolonging the process of starvation. Soon, he came to realize, he’d have to eat the majority of the food he was served, that is, if he wanted to survive the situation he was dragged into.

Maybe the people Hannibal took the lives of would take solace in the fact that their deaths weren’t completely without merit. They could aid in Will’s escape and Hannibal's second capture.

On the bed, Will continued to retch at the idea anyway, shrunken stomach heaving in disgust.

His forearms cross over his eyes, shielding them from the light of the lamp that hung over his bed. They, along with his stringy biceps, ached with overuse.

Every night and morning he wore down the poor welding job that attached the bars on the window to their frame. Either he was going crazy or they were actually giving way, bending to the will of his starving muscles.

He didn’t know what he expected. If there were working cameras in the restroom, the camera in his room had to be working. Hannibal had to have been watching him as he did his nightly rounds of tugging futility at the bars that separates him from the outside world. He was messing with him. When Will would be able escape, that’s when the personification of death and evil would loom behind him and take away his hopes with one fell swoop.

With that in mind, he slid off the bed and renewed his attempts at escaping. He was so close he could taste it, and even if Hannibal planned on swiping his dreams from him, at least Will would have the comfort in knowing that was his plan all along.

The inevitable would happen faster if Will kept on and he found a weird sense of hope in his realism.

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"Will."

The mentioned suddenly fazed back into focus at the sound of his name. Finally the sights around him were beginning to register and he realized he was once again sitting at the table in the dining room.

When he looked at the plate of food sitting in front of him, he noticed it had already been relieved if the components he ate exclusively, leaving only the meat. He couldn't recall eating the vegetables, but at the same time, he couldn't really recall anything leading to that point.

Sadly it felt as though his presence and sanity was declining with his sleep and nutrients

"Yes?"

"Would you like to go back to your room?"

Will's eyes remained downcast towards the slabs of meat on the platter, debating. In front of him, a slight crease appeared near one of Hannibal's invisible brows, revealing how negatively he had begun to view Will's appearance. As Will fought with either eating or starving, Hannibal questioned if he needed to force a feeding tube into the stubborn man's stomach.

Before Hannibal could come to a conclusion, Will used his fork to cut a section from the slab and fed it into his mouth, eyes vacant.

Hannibal was pleased.

Will felt Hannibal's pleasure before he forced himself to feel nothing again. The act he was taking part in demanded no thought, it was a means to an end and nothing more, so after swallowing his first bite, Hannibal watched with an air of curiosity as the profiler placed bite after bite into his orifice until there were no remains on the plate.

There was a mixed silence before Will's hoarse voice disrupted it.

"I would like to go to my room now, please."

With a silent sigh and unreadable eyes, Hannibal nodded, "Of course."

As Will was lead back up to his room, he questioned if he'd consider Hannibal's tone endearing.

Chapter End Notes

I apologize for the gap and short chapter but things will pick up. Thank you all for sticking with me!

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